
CAL FIRE NEWS RELEASE

California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection



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CAL FIRE Reminds Californians – Change Your Clocks, Change Your Batteries

Sacramento – Smoke alarms are such a common feature in homes across California that it is easy to take them for granted. Tragically nearly two-thirds of residential fire deaths occur in homes without working smoke alarms. To help reduce these losses, CAL FIRE and the Office of the State Fire Marshal are reminding all Californians to change the batteries in their smoke alarms when changing their clocks this Saturday night in observance of Daylight Saving Time.

When smoke alarms fail to operate, it is usually because batteries are missing, disconnected or dead.

“Working smoke alarms greatly reduce the likelihood of residential fire-related fatalities by providing an early audible warning, alerting occupants and giving them an opportunity to safely escape,” said Acting State Fire Marshal Tonya Hoover.

That’s critical because 85 percent of all fire deaths occur in the home, and the majority occur at night when most people are sleeping.

“Smoke alarms unquestionably help save lives, but a smoke alarm is nothing without a working battery inside of it” said Chief Ken Pimlott, acting director of CAL FIRE. “Just a few minutes twice a year to change that battery can truly mean the difference between life and death.”

CAL FIRE has the following tips on smoke alarms:

- Test smoke alarms once a month.
- Replace batteries in all smoke alarms twice a year.
- Don’t “borrow” or remove batteries from smoke alarms even temporarily.
- Regularly vacuum or dust smoke alarms to keep them working properly.
- Replace smoke alarms every 10 years.
- Don’t paint over smoke alarms.
- Practice family fire drills so everyone knows what to do if the smoke alarm goes off.

[Smoke Alarms Help Save Lives Fact Sheet](#)

Find more information visit the CAL FIRE Web site at www.fire.ca.gov.

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